everyone can form his own opinion on every point. Yet we may ask, why should there be bishops? why the Pope?

Strange it is that no untrained person would dare to build a house by himself, be his own tailor, make himself a pair of shoes or cure himself of a sickness. Yet when it is question of religious life, people set aside authority, refuse to place any trust in it, and even distrust and disobey it with impunity.

During the past 200 years, especially the last half century, the Catholic priesthood has been so much the object of accusation, insult and defamation at the hands of both politicians and writers that one can well understand how it is that the faithful have the greatest difficulty in approaching a priest and becoming friendly with him. But now when, undoubtedly, there is a return to God, as we see, the faithful must overcome their bias and once again begin to share their feelings, their thoughts, and their faith with the priest.

For the last ten years, while the religious authorities have shown restraint, the people have hastily busied themselves with wonders which, to say the least, have not been verified.

To be honest we must admit that such events may be simply the expression of natural religious enthusiasm. They are not Christian events, and they give a dangerous pretext to those who are ready to discover at all costs the mingling and survival of paganism and superstition in Christian belief and life and especially in Catholicism. Just as wrongdoing may find its way into our daily lives, so may error. We must know it for what it is. Just as the Church has the power to forgive sins, so has it also been commanded by God to keep us from error.

Catholics should give ear to the word of God which the Church, and the Church alone, preserves and repeats whole and untarnished. They should not run like sheep without a shepherd, and listen to other voices seeking to drown the voice of the Church. We have the Holy Scripture; we have tradition; we have the chief Shepherd and a hundred other shepherds next door to our own homes. Why should we offer a spectacle of foolishness or unhealthy excitement to those who oppose and despise us? " Christians, be more prudent " wrote Dante in his day, " Do not be like feathers that are the sport of every wind." The great poet gave the very same reasons that we give today; " You have the Old and the New Testament, and the Shepherd of the Church to guide you." Dante's conclusion too, is the same as ours; " This is sufficient for your salvation " (Canto 5, VV.. 73-77)

We recommend the following Booksellers and Publishers:

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Augustine Publishing Co., Chulmleigh, Devon EX 187IL
Holy Cross Bookshop, 4 Brownhill Rd., Catford, London
Carmel of Plymouth, 1 Grenville Rd., St. Judes, Plymouth
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EIRE

Faith and Family Resources, Box 1869, Dublin 16

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The Angelus Books of Barrie, 38 Jill's Court, Barrie, Ontario, L4M 4L7, Canada

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The Neumann Press, Rural Rt. 2, Long Prairie, Minnesota 56347, U.S.A.

APROPOS

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - NO. 7A 1989

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IRELAND - THE BATTLE CONTINUES

In September 1983 the 'Pro-life' amendment to the Irish Constitution was approved by the Irish electorate. That this decision did not meet with universal approval has now become clear. Indeed one suspects that the Irish establishment would be content to have this amendment ignored out of existence. All credit therefore to those doughty fighters in the Irish S.P.U.C. who have taken action which the Irish establishment singularly failed to contemplate.

EMBARRASSING EPISODES

In 1986 Mr. Justice Liam Hamilton ruled in the High Court that the pro-life amendment also made it illegal to publish or disseminate information that a woman to have an abortion; a ruling that was overturned by the Supreme Court in May 1988. This resulted from actions by S.P.U.C. against two groups, the Well Woman Clinic and Open Line Counselling which were providing advice and information.

S.P.U.C. directed its guns against Irish Student Publishing to the Irish News, 'had continued to provide information despite the 1986 judgement'[1]. On 7th August 1989 Miss Justice Carroll, a High Court judge, accused S.P.U.C. of assuming a self appointed policing role and refused S.P.U.C's application for an injunction against University College Dublin Students, advising that it was the Attorney General's role to police the constitution. Nevertheless she did warn the students that they would require to 'study the Supreme Court judgement (against Well Woman and Open Line Counselling) very carefully and apply it when they publish the guide and be very clear that if they disregard the judgement, they are breaking the law and will have to pay the consequences.'[2]

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1. 9th Oct. 1989 (This information was published in a student Guide.)

2. Irish Independent, 8th September 1989

In the meantime Trinity College Dublin Student's Union said it would print and distribute information on abortion to its members in its forthcoming Freshers' Guidebook because 'the mandate handed down to them by the students of the college cannot be ignored or broken.'[3] Subsequently Miss Justice Carroll's judgement was overruled and S.P.U.C's role was wholly vindicated.

In mid September this year S.P.U.C. sent letters to 14 student leaders from Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin and the Union of Students in Ireland requesting them to give an undertaking that they would not publish or distribute abortion information.

Ed O'Loughlin in the Irish News observed that, 'the Dublin establishment, while socially very conservative, is keen to promote the Republic abroad as a modern forward looking young country and would find such episodes extremely embarrassing.

The governing Fianna Fail party, which is largely responsible for the strict wording of the 1983 constitutional amendment, now has good cause to regret the recent Supreme Court judgement allowing S.P.U.C. to in effect police the amendment. The government now finds itself powerless to intervene in the crisis while S.P.U.C. is making all the running.'[4]

Another embarrassing episode had arisen in August 1989 when the story broke concerning 'The Irish in Britain Directory' launched in Dublin amid praise from the Fine Gael Deputy leader, John Bruton, T.D., Workers' Party President Prionsias de Rossa T.D.,M.E.P. and warmly welcomed by representatives of Foreign Affairs Minister, Gerry Collins and Labour Minister Bertie Aherne. Mr. Andrew O'Rourke, the Republic's Ambassador to London also described the Directory as 'a very valuable source book of information for Irish people in Britain' - the Directory contains the phone number and address of the London-based Irish Womens Abortion Support

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3. ibid

4. 9th October 1989

Group.[5]

STUDENTS DEFIANCE

The student leaders responded to the S.P.U.C. demands by open defiance. They attended a Press conference on 19th September 1989, wearing T-shirts sporting an abortion information telephone number, and Ms Ivana Bacik, President of Trinity College Students Union protested: 'We will not allow the wishes of our members to be censored undemocratically by a lobby group like S.P.U.C. We will fight them all the way.'[6]

The battle lines had thus been drawn and in most press reports - at least those I have read - the battle was not about S.P.U.C.'s defence of the pro-life amendment and the unborn child but rather about the 'right' to freedom of information which the students claimed S.P.U.C. was attempting to deny them.

A UNITED FRONT

Much prominence was given to the support for the defiant students. The Union of Students in Ireland alleged that support among student unions was growing with unions at Waterford Regional Technical College (RTC), Carlow RTC, Thomond College and Dublin City University deciding on 28th September 1989 to distribute handbooks with abortion information. They also claimed to have support from the Labour Party, the Workers' Party, Sinn Fein and the Irish Council of Civil Liberties which of course was entirely predictable.[7] That last body accused S.P.U.C. of being "arrogant self appointed custodians of morality" masquerading as protectors of life.[8] Even more predictable was the reaction of the Campaign to Separate Church and State which stated that the students were "shouldering the burden of

5. Irish News 30th August 1989

6. Irish News 20th September 1989

7. Irish Independent 29th September 1989.

8. ibid. 26th September 1989.

democracy in a thoroughly responsible manner." [9]

The Federated Workers' Union of Ireland No.15 branch Trinity College Dublin section committee, having managed to gain enough breath after describing themselves, called on the college authorities to stand behind the students in reaffirming the college's long standing commitment to civil liberties and the notion of a pluralist Irish society.9

CLERICAL SUPPORT

There are few student causes, however outrageous, that cannot find a man of the cloth to give them support. Fr. Michael Byrne, chaplain to the 1300 students at Carlow Regional Technical College, fulfilled the role on this occasion, remarking that, 'always and everywhere to restrict access to information is considered oppressive and in this instance the students have responded to this restriction through protest. I would support them in their right to freedom of information.'

Only 4 students out of 1000 voting at Carlow RTC voted against the proposal to distribute information on abortion in their welfare handbook. The Irish News advised us that Fr. Byrne 'had reservations about how the vote by public show of hands was "managed" and that he said "by and large I support the students". The Students' vote was not a vote for abortion, Fr. Byrne argued, but a vote for freedom of speech.'

It was left to local Fine Gael TD, Mr John Brown to remark that parents in the town 'didn't like the idea of this abortion information being thrown at their sons or daughters in college.'[10]

JUSTICE COSTELLO'S INJUNCTION

On 3rd October 1989 Mr Justice Costello granted a temporary injunction against Ivana Bacik, Graeme Murphy, Owen Lanigan

9. ibid 6th October 1989

10. Irish News 2nd October 1989

and James Davis of Trinity College Dublin Students Union restraining them from publishing information on abortion but, according to the Irish Independent 'Trinity Union leaders were distributing copies of their controversial Freshers' Guide, which contains abortion information, to students at a lunchtime concert' i.e. within an hour of the injunction, and 'In the afternoon when the order was served on them the students made clear their intention to continue distributing the guides during Fresher's week' - continuing 'that copies of the guide continued to be freely available from the Freshers' Week stalls in the college.'[11]

Trinity College Dublin students were also found distributing leaflets containing information on abortion in the city centre on days following the injunction.[12]

DES RUSHE'S IMPATIENCE

This deplorable state of affairs drove Des Rushe, Tatler's Parade columnist of the Irish Independent, to ask on 4th October 1989: 'Is it not clear that the Students' Unions have acted in defiance of the High Court and the Supreme court, because the information they have published is precisely that which both courts declared illegal?

And is it not astonishing that a number of our TD's (Members of Parliament) - legislators who are supported to make our laws and to ensure that they are implemented - have encouraged them to do so?'

So firm were the students in their defiance that when the 14 students finally appeared in court on 9th October they had declared their willingness to be imprisoned 'to defend women's rights to information' and to make the law completely unworkable. On the day of the court hearing protesting students blocked traffic outside the High Court while Miss Justice Carroll heard the evidence. Miss Justice Carroll, however, postponed a decision and instead referred certain matters to the European Court, remarking that 'if there was

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11. Irish Independent 4th Oct. 1989

12. Irish Independent 6th Oct. 1989

a right to receive information, there must be a corresponding right to give it and that was the issue in this case!

This referral to the European Court would inevitably delay consideration for anything up to 18 months and would leave the Students free to continue publishing and distributing abortion information. S.P.U.C. immediately sought an appeal to the Supreme Court, which cannot be heard until late November.

BAN AND BURN

On October 12th the Irish Independent announced: '15000 copies of USI News which contains advice and information on abortion will be distributed in colleges throughout the country today, ...the 15000 copies were printed in the North and were quietly delivered to student unions over the past few days ready for simultaneous release. The whole operation was planned last week by student leaders who intended to put it into effect regardless of the decision of the High Court.'

Thus while Rescuers are imprisoned in Britain for exercising a true right to impart information concerning the horror of abortion to Irish girls frequenting British Aborttoirs, Irish students are allowed to exercise a false 'right' to provide the self same Irish girls with the information to make contact with such aborttoirs.

One can only pray that Justice Carroll's opinions will once again be overruled by the Irish Supreme Court and that Catholic students in Ireland will rise in defence of the unborn. John Sheridan, Students Union leader at Sligo Regional College has indicated that most of the 2000 students there are against the publication of information about abortion and students at University College Cork, in what is said to have been the biggest turnout in the college's history, overwhelmingly voted against abortion information being published in the college handbook.

One can only hope that the Sligo and Cork examples will be repeated time and again and that the Church, parents and Catholic students will unite in protest to have these publications banned and burned. If they do not it will be to Ireland's everlasting shame.

A.S.F.

CATHOLIC IRELAND?

Despite what we have written elsewhere in this issue regarding the antics of Irish Students in promoting abortion information, there are many readers, no doubt, who have a lingering vision of a Catholic Ireland; a vision sustained by such victories as the anti-divorce and pro-life amendments to the constitution.

We must not let these good developments disguise the fact that Ireland is under attack, a relentless attack, which if not combatted vigorously, will rot away what is left of the moral fibre of the Irish nation. A leading Catholic layman has already indicated that his organization, The Knights of Colambanus, are seriously worried about the moral fabric of Irish society.[1] And Cardinal O'Fiaich, whom we have criticized in the past, recently called for more vocations, the defence of Christian marriage, and daily family prayer, remarking that an Ireland weakened in faith and borrowing the worst features of other countries would have nothing to offer Europe after 1992.[2]

These expressions of concern however will come to naught unless the Catholic Church re-asserts its authority and begins to direct its attention to the defence of Catholic life in Ireland. The Irish Bishops must promote and sustain this defence by first demanding that both people and politicians respect the moral law by safeguarding it in the nation's laws. This the Bishops should do by exercising the influence they are alleged to have, and abused for having, to ensure that politicians will be made aware of the consequences of thumbing their noses at the moral law. At all costs the Bishops must avoid associating themselves with those politicians, who keen to establish a pluralistic state, will slowly and surely whittle away whatever influence the Church continues to have in Ireland. Even the Church's worst enemies expect her to fight to keep Ireland Catholic and, while it is true they will take advantage of Catholic weakness, they will have nothing but contempt for those Churchmen who are tempted to play politics with the nation's faith.

Already the strident voices of those who seek separation of Church and State are becoming bolder. Scarcely a month goes

by in Ireland without some new ploy to remove the Church's influence in one or more avenues of the nation's life. Only recently Ms Nuala Fennell, a former junior minister for Womens Affairs, called for the State to take the initiative in separating its role from that of the Church by making a Registry Office marriage service obligatory for all Catholics and the Church service optional.[3]

BISHOP BASHING

The lack of respect for Churchmen however was clearly demonstrated by Alan Dukes, leader of Fine Gael, who publicly described an unnamed bishop as "utterly utterly opportunist" and a 'bastard'.[4] Now for what reason Mr Dukes was driven to make this accusation we do not know but the fact that he did indicates only too clearly that Irish politicians can feel confident enough to say such things without being too worried about the political consequences. Perhaps the political activities of some Bishops have made some politicians feel that certain Bishops are of their own kind. If the Bishops are to suffer abuse in this way, is it not better that they do so in defence of the Church and its role in a Catholic nation rather than as players in the game to make Ireland a pluralistic society? Bishop Comiskey, Bishop of Ferns, attacked Mr Dukes for his comments alleging that it was almost impossible to have a civil debate on the Church and State relationship in Ireland.

BISHOP COMISKEY's FOUR PRINCIPLES

In his address to The General Humbert 1989 Bicentennial Summer School, Bishop Comiskey suggested that certain principles ought to be laid down as applicable in any debate touching on the relationship between Church and State, religion and politics, law and morality.

These were:

i. The religious character of certain values does not deny them acceptability as part of the public moral consensus

ii. Not all religiously based values automatically qualify for a place in our public morality and our public politics

iii. We create our public morality through consensus and that consensus reflects to some extent the religious values of a great majority of our citizens

iv. The question as to whether to engage the political system in a struggle to have it adopt certain articles of our belief as part of public morality is not a matter of doctrine; it is a matter of prudential political judgement. [5]

Now it may well be that Bishop Comiskey's principles are construed as a defence of the Irish people's right to have some of their religious and moral beliefs recognized by the constitution and that his statement that 'we create our public morality through consensus' is merely an observation. But Ireland is a Catholic nation and the Bishop seems unduly defensive. Indeed could one not construe elements of his principles as little short of capitulation to the pluralists and separatists.

It is true that Ireland may create its public morality through consensus but is that the way that public morality ought to be created? In a Catholic country should the laws of the state not conform to the moral law? Has a people Catholic or otherwise the right to make laws which flout the laws of Him from Whom all power comes? And can one be so bold as to say it is merely a matter of prudential political judgement as to whether to engage the political system in a struggle to have it adopt certain articles of our belief as public morality? There have only been two such struggles in the last decade: the pro-life amendment and the anti-divorce amendment and it is clear that had these not been introduced the aims of the separatists and pluralists would have been nearer fruition. It was necessary to engage in political struggle to outlaw divorce and abortion precisely because attempts were being made to force both these evils on Ireland by appeals to International bodies out-with Ireland. The reason for engaging in the struggle however was doctrinal. It was necessary to remind the Irish people of their duty, to recognize the Social Kingship of Christ the King, to acknowledge their duty to have their laws and customs conform to His moral law. It is indeed a great pity that Bishop Comiskey chose to enunciate these 4 principles rather than Catholic principles. The best form of defence is attack and the Bishop should have taken this opportunity not to discuss

the unsatisfactory status quo but rather to lambast those who seek to exclude Christ from the nation's affairs. In doing so he could have rallied the remnant of Catholic Irish to the banner of Christ the King. If certain Bishops would exercise their vigour in this direction, as much as they do against apartheid, then Ireland might not be in such a perilous state.

IRELAND'S MILESTONES OF PROGRESS

In a recent article in the Irish Independent the writer, while dismissing the anti-divorce and pro-life amendments as "a swing back to regressive values', hailed the following as milestones of 'progress', and as evidence of Ireland's sexual liberation, which, he/she advises us, 'is to a large extent the story of Ireland's liberation from Catholic morality';

'The founding of the Womens Rights Group 1971; The removal of the marriage bar 1973, David Norris' victory in the European Court to make homosexuality legal 1988, the founding of the Well Women Clinic 1978, the availability of contraception 1985, all occurring over a period of less than 20 years.'

According to the writer evidence of this 'liberation' presents itself in more couples living together out of wedlock; more broken marriages - this due to the basis of marriage changing from a contractual to a sexual and emotional one; and less restrictive film censorship.

THE POWER OF THE MEDIA

'But', as the Independent columnist advises us,' by far the most decisive influence singled out by all the interviewees is that of the media - both English and Irish television and radio. Gay Byrne in an interview in "In Good Company"...quotes Oliver J. Flanagan as saying "there was no sex in Ireland until Telefis Eireann went on the air."
With the most isolated household in rural Ireland watching the sexual cavortings in Dallas the winds of change are bound to follow.'[6]

British Television already displays all manner of explicit sexual behaviour - or rather lack of it - now frequently

interspersed with the media's "statutory" and increasing input of "gay" and lesbian material, and an obsession with condoms - something with which some 'comedians' seem particularly afflicted. If this is becoming a feature of Irish life, along with British Women's magazines then Cardinal O'Fiaich has every reason to worry about Ireland borrowing the worst features of other nations.

MIMICKING THE BRITS

The British Health Education establishment's obsession with condoms has apparently infected its Irish counterpart.

A recent survey conducted in Ireland by an Aids awareness programme for schools allegedly reveals that 20% of boys and 6% of girls in second level schools in Ireland had experience of sex. The survey had also shown that rural pupils were less likely to use condoms than urban pupils; 56% of rural teenagers surveyed said they would use condoms if they had sex, compared to 77% in city schools, But following the doctors' campaign in schools these numbers had risen to 90%![7]

Thus in Catholic Ireland it is claimed that 90% of teenagers surveyed would indulge in a practice regarded by the Church as intrinsically evil. Not surprisingly another survey conducted among Northern Irish Youths by Dr Edward Cairns indicated that the Catholic versus Protestant difference among young people on Abortion and sexual morality has virtually disappeared. This collapse in Catholic sexual morality has also been noted in the seminaries. In the Universe of 3rd Sept. 1989 it is reported that Eugene Duffy, a lecturer in theology at All Hallows College Dublin, wrote, in a recent issue of The Furrow, that seminarians are less qualified academically, are critical of authority, take their views from the media rather than the Church and often have ambivalent views on sexual morality. (Professor P. Compton of Queens University, who recently carried out a survey of N. Irish women, stated 'The Catholic patterns of family planning use have rapidly converged on those of Protestants. It seems likely that any remaining denominational distinctiveness will have disappeared within a relatively short time scale.' Indeed his study indicated that younger more recently married Protestant Fundamentalist women are

more likely to disapprove of family planning than younger Catholics.)[8].

ARCHBISHOP MCQUADE'S WARNING

When the legalisation of contraceptives was first mooted in Ireland the then Archbishop of Dublin warned that if such moves were successful a curse would fall upon Ireland. The subsequent legalization of contraception, which was arrived at with little resistance from the Irish Hierarchy, has indeed borne its evil fruits. Having taken this first step towards a contraceptive society the Irish have unleashed a force which will destroy their nation and its moral fibre.

Condomania, the unashamed reliance on condoms as a defence against AIDS and other sexually transmissible disease, which is already widespread in Britain through the promotion of so called 'safe' sex, could not have been possible in Ireland without the traitorous decision of the Dail, in 1979 and 1985, to permit the sale of contraceptives.

FR. LAWLOR SPEAKS OUT

That such campaigns, to promote condoms as a defence against Aids, are now taking place in Irish Schools is deplorable. Fr. Harry Lawlor S.J. declared, in Limerick, that there were very grave mistakes in suggestions that children in schools should be taught how to use condoms as a means of avoiding AIDS. He stated that using condoms was always evil and said that children should be warned - if the authorities persisted in talking to them about condoms- that using condoms was a serious sin and nothing less than fornication. 'We can be certain' he said, 'that condoms would not stop the plague of AIDS - but we can be certain that self-control would do much to stay that plague.'[9]

It appears that the fight against AIDS and 'unwanted" pregnancies -to some a greater scourge than AIDS - justifies the most outrageous behaviour. How else can one account for the action of Queens University Students Union Belfast distributing free condoms to sixth form pupils during the college's open day. One irate mother remarked that ' They seem to be trying to get school students used to an atmosphere of immorality and permissiveness.' Ms Imelda

O'Neil, Womens Rights Officer of the Union, however, was wholly unrepentant. 'University', she said, is 'usually a more liberal atmosphere and of course there will be a lot of unwanted pregnancies which could force many young women to leave third level education. We don't see this as a moral issue. It has more to do with student welfare.....' [10] Following protests by parents and teachers the University authorities ordered the students not to distribute any more at the second open day. But Dominic Doherty, President of the Union, advised that Condoms would still be available in the student's union during the last open day and that the Union felt they were promoting a degree of responsibility amongst people who are sexually active. [11]

IN DECLINE

Ireland has all the signs of a nation in decline. The Church is no longer attracting young people, vocations are in decline, the demands for separation of Church and state grow ever louder and the ever pervading influence of the media continues to chip and whittle away at the nation's moral fabric. All is not lost however and true Irish patriots have a responsibility to take action to defend the true interests of Ireland. That the anti-divorce and pro-life amendments were carried is proof that there is a strong residue of Catholicism in Ireland, but as we know from the polls, this residue is found mainly in the older and rural sections of the nation. The young of Ireland are being corrupted and as time goes on the consensus may not be there to sustain the anti-divorce and pro-life amendments.

Charity begins at home and there is no greater need of charitable assistance than in the faith of young Irish people. There is little point in the Irish episcopate pursuing justice and peace in Latin America, the Philippines or South Africa when their own young people are starving from want of the truth - the Truth that will set them free. These young people need sound catechisms, a strong and traditional liturgy, and they need more than anything the example of a brave, uncompromising clergy and episcopate which will inspire them. If the clergy or Bishops are prepared to

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C.V. Productions, P.O. Box 17, Rainham, Gillingham Kent ME8 0JU.

- Ask about their cassette-a month scheme -

negotiate with or accommodate the pluralists and separatists then they may as well throw in the towel now.

The salvation of the Irish Nation depends on the nation accepting and conforming to the reign of Christ the King. Pius X1 made this abundantly clear in QUAS PRIMAS and it is these words of that pontiff that the Irish both clerical and lay must keep firmly in mind in the battle that lies ahead:

' "His empire includes not only Catholic nations, not only baptized persons who, though of right belonging to the Church, have been led astray by error, or have been cut off from her by schism, but all those who are outside the Christian faith; so that truly the whole of mankind is subject to the power of Jesus Christ." Nor is there any difference in this matter between the individual and the family or the State; for all men, whether individually or collectively, are under the dominion of Christ. In Him is the salvation of the individual, in Him is the salvation of society. "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved." He is the author of happiness and true prosperity for every man and for every nation. "For a nation is happy when its citizens are happy. What else is a nation but a number of men living in concord?" If therefore, the rulers of nations wish to preserve their authority, to promote and increase the prosperity of their people, they will not neglect the public duty of reverence and obedience to the rule of Christ. What We said at the beginning of Our Pontificate concerning the decline of public authority, and the lack of respect for the same, is equally true at the present day. "With God and Jesus Christ," We said, "excluded from political life, with authority derived not from God but from man, the very basis of that authority has been taken away, because the chief reason of the distinction between ruler and subject has been eliminated. The result is that human society is tottering to its fall, because it has no longer a secure and solid foundation." A.S.F.

A young Irish reader of APROPOS is anxious to meet like minded Irish men or women with a view to establishing the type of action favoured by APROPOS, i.e. to promote Catholic lay initiatives in the temporal order, juridically distinct from the hierarchy.

Please contact James Reynolds, Lough Adair, Coolarty, Co. Longford, Eire, for further information. Tel: 043 23443

ENDNOTES

1. Irish News, 10th August 1989

2.Irish News, 25th September 1989

3. Irish Press, September 11 1989

4. Irish Press, August 22, 1989

5. The Irish News, 22nd Aug. 1989

6.The Irish Independent, 9th Aug. 1989

7. Irish Independent, September 12th 1989. The survey carried out by the AIDS awareness programme for school leavers was carried out by an honours graduate from Thomond College, Limerick. The survey was conducted along with an AIDS education campaign by public health doctors in schools throughout the country.

8. Irish News, 21st August 1989

9. Irish Independent, 16th Sept. 1989. (A report in the I. Independent of 12/9/89 stated that the AIDS Action Alliance wanted school programmes to be more explicit about sex and the use of condoms)

10. Irish News, 15th Sept., 1989

11. Irish News, 16th Sept., 1989.

"THEOTOKOS" - Mother of God

When my Soul in a pit of darkness
Reels like some hunted thing
Mother of God, Remember me
Before the face of the King.

When my life is changed to anguish
And I sigh for what is not
And my tears are sown in secret
On some barren desert plot.

Mother of Christ, turn loving eyes
That know the heart's hot flood
Upon my plight and offer again
Thy Heart's, Thy Son's precious Blood.

When my world is a dying moment
And my eyes are filmed for Thee
And all have forgot the child and the youth
Then, Mother of God, remember me.

The above is from a collection of eleven poems, by Michael Greenhill and dedicated to Our Lady. This collection is available from Mr. Greenhill at 12 Causeway Close, Norwich, NR2 4UP, Norfolk, England for 2 - the proceeds of which will be given to charity.

WHY THE GOLDEN RULE IS NOT ENOUGH

There is an effort nowadays to propose the Golden Rule as a basis on which a sort of common religion could be formed from the best elements of the various so-called great world religions. A seemingly lesser form of this "syncretism" is to propose the Golden Rule as the essential good that all religions have in common, and to regard the differences as trivial and not worth fighting over. Thus in a recent article in the **WORD** magazine (June 1988 p.18) [1], we read:

'The major religions of the world have at the centre of their moral teachings a simple statement which has come to be called the GOLDEN RULE. Considering the variety of beliefs, languages and cultures represented in these faiths, it is remarkable that the core teaching is the same....'

What should Catholics make of this?

The Catholic should regard the Golden Rule as a true indication of some of our duties to our neighbour. To abstain from doing to others what we would not wish others to do to us, is a general rule of conduct which, if followed, would no doubt prevent considerable evil in our world. It is a rule which can be discovered by natural reason. The Golden Rule is not however an adequate summary of true religion or of moral law, and this for at least three reasons:

1. It ignores our most important duties of all which are our duties to our Creator, Almighty God.

2. It partakes of Pelagianism in that it suggests that a right relationship with God is obtained in and by our own goodness or even "niceness".

3. In fact it does not cover all our duties to our neighbour, let alone cover Our Lord's new commandment that we love our neighbour as Christ has loved us.

---

[1] Published by the Divine Word Missionaries, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland)

4. It reduces Our Lord to being merely another religious figure attributing to Him no special position. His Church becomes another option.

The Golden Rule does not include or even allude to our most important duties which are those we have to God. God has created every human being, solely out of His mercy, and we owe everything to Him. We owe Him our thanks, our worship, our obedience, our belief, our hope, and above all our love. 'This is the first and the greatest commandment. you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength...' To reduce religion to the service of man fits right into the prevailing 'horizontalism' which is so common even among catholics. It should be said here that we must not only worship God, we must and are obliged to worship God in the manner which He himself has indicated by many and adequate signs.

To reduce all religion to the Golden Rule is disastrous for a second reason which flows from the above. Religion, of course concerns in some way our relationship with God. So the implication of this unfortunate reductionism is this: 'Well, if I just keep the Golden Rule, I'll be alright with God.' (which is a common idea). This implies that salvation is merely the reward of a naturally good life, whereas it actually is an elevation of the natural and fallen man to a supernatural level of communion with God, which elevation can only be accomplished by God Himself. It implies that I accomplish my salvation on my own strength and goodness or 'niceness' (Which was the error of Pelagius). But naturally good acts are incapable of elevating someone to a supernatural end. We cannot be saved by our good deeds but only by a Divine Saviour. 'For it is by grace that you are saved, through faith, and not by your own works.' We add immediately of course that we must in fact keep the commandments if we would be saved.

The Golden Rule is not an adequate summary of all the duties owed to one's neighbour as found in the natural law. And it is far below the demands of authentic Christian Charity towards one's neighbour. The natural law, for example, prohibits fornication. But two lovers might say: 'We both want each other, therefore we are following the Golden Rule.

No one is getting hurt!' Again, sometimes our duties demand causing some discomfort to another to give them a greater good, as when we oppose abortion. This causes great discomfort to some people. Should we therefore desist from causing discomfort to others since we do not wish for any pain ourselves? So it is clear that many of our duties to our neighbour are not included in the Golden Rule.

Jesus Christ has given us a new commandment: 'Love each other as I have loved you... unto the Death of the Cross.' Christian Charity desires the greatest possible good for our neighbour; not merely a full belly, but eternal salvation, perfect happiness in Heaven with God forever. The Golden rule knows nothing of this.

As we have said, the Golden Rule considered in itself is true and good as far as it goes. But to reduce religion to the Golden Rule not only does not include supernatural Charity, it in fact is opposed to the love of God. By emphasizing that it is common to all religions, that Jesus was not 'original' in giving it to us, there is the subtle insinuation that Jesus is not only merely one religious prophet among others. He is not even the best, because, for example, Hillel (President of the Sanhedrin who died about AD 10) thought of it first. (Hillel didn't think of it first - it is found already in the Old Testament). Sometimes, it is even suggested that Jesus learned the Golden Rule from Hillel. Jesus Christ, 'the Light of the World', is the Divine Teacher of the human race, and being God is the author of the natural law, of which the Golden Rule is a partial expression.

The true good and peace of the world, and the true resolution of religious conflict will lie in this: the acceptance and the living out of the Way which God Himself has given: Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life, true God and perfect man, and our only Saviour. And we will be united to Jesus if we seek Him and hear Him where He is to be found, in His Mystical Body, the Catholic Church, built on Peter and His Successors to the end of time, against which ' the Powers of Hell will never prevail.'

Father Paul McDonald

WHEN THERE IS AN ECLIPSE...

by JEAN MADIRAN

(Monsieur Madiran has been exposing modernism in the Church since at least 1956. We translate his most recent critique from ITINÉRAIRES *No.336 for Sept-Oct. 1989. SH & GL.)*

PROLOGUE

If I want a car, a watch, a calculator or a rocket, I naturally want the latest model. But if we are concerned with the spirit and not machines, then modernity must be distinguished from Christianity and stands in opposition to it insofar as it rejects all idea of a moral law, natural or supernatural, which is certain, objective, obligatory, universal, immutable, and which by definition demands the adherence of our consciences. Modernity, in the spiritual realm, consists in supposing that a man is adult and free only when he does not accept any authority, any guidance, human or divine, as being superior to him; his own conscience must determine for itself what is good and evil.

It is, however, still possible to remain more or less Christian, in name at least. The modern Christian is one who, instead of conforming his conscience to the Faith, receives and adapts the Faith to suit his own conscience.

Having thus defined modernity, the modern, modernism (in the spiritual, not the technological sense), one can better understand Péguy's (1) warning "Whatever one may say, in the modern world all is modern, and it is without doubt modernism's greatest achievement to have in more ways than one, in almost every way, modernised Christianity itself, the Church and what was left of Christendom. Thus when there is an eclipse the whole world is cast into darkness."

(1) Charles Péguy (1873-1914), French poet and thinker, founder of the 'Cahiers de la Quinzaine' (1900-1914). At first a socialist and militant supporter of Dreyfus, he later returned to the Faith and to a passionate patriotism (crowned by his death in action in the early days of World War One). He lived through the anti-clerical offensive of the Third Republic and the 1905 Laws of Separation (of Church and state); in his view contemporary France had been "de-christianized" even though the Church retained a strong institutional presence. (Trans.)

"When there is an eclipse..." Péguy was writing at the beginning of the century. One can see that the eclipse does not date from yesterday, nor from the last Council. Make no mistake about it: where there is an eclipse, everyone is in darkness. Even those who do not mistake the darkness for light. They are right not to let themselves be taken in. But in the prevailing darkness they cannot be sure of knowing the right road ahead.

LABOR SOLIS

The prophecy of St. Malachy is not recognised as authentic by the Church, and he is no longer considered to be its author (2). The motto assigned by the prophecy to the pontificate of John Paul II: "*de labore solis*", is generally considered to be enigmatic in its supposedly literal translations. But in Virgil *labor solis* means an eclipse of the sun. We do indeed live in a time of falling darkness.

Nevertheless, this eclipse did not begin in 1978 with the accession of Cardinal Wojtila as sovereign pontiff, though a new chapter did begin with his accession. The eclipse of Catholicism did not begin with the Vatican Council (1962-1965), or with the death of Pius XII in 1958, though each of these dates marks a different phase of the eclipse.

Among the causes of the eclipse we must include the temporal ones properly so-called, the two world wars of the 20th century. The first destroyed the last great Catholic state, the Austro-Hungarian empire, deliberately assassinated by the victors of 1918. The defeat of Hitler's pagan Reich at the end of the second was in no respect a victory for Christendom: there was no longer any Catholic state among the victorious Great Powers at Yalta and Potsdam who with the foundation of the UN established the dominant features of the world in which we live. The victory of 1945 was a joint victory of Anglo-Saxon protestantism and marxism-leninism; these two, decidedly uneasy bed-fellows in any case, had and have nothing in common beyond the anti-

(2) Attwater, in the 'Penguin Dictionary of Saints', 1965, considers them to be a 16th century forgery. (Trans.)

dogmatic ideology of modern Judaism, with the latter's essential hostility to Christian dogmas,...in a word, the ideology of the rights of man and those ideologies that are derived from it or related to it.

The dominant ideologies and dynasties in the world that emerged from the victory of 1945 are therefore more influenced by Judaism than by Catholicism. They trace the origins of their historical development between the 16th and 19th centuries to the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Revolution. The recent history of the civilised world is a progressive and continuing flight away from any idea of Christendom (that is, a Christianity authentically lived and informing the structures of society). It is true that the Church, increasingly dominated and eclipsed, is not widely persecuted in the usual sense, as it was in the days of Nero or as it is in the marxist-leninist states. In the western world, the Church has become sufficiently docile for such methods of physical repression to be regarded as unnecessary, sufficiently submissive to the temporal domination imposed on her, her exclusion from any say in the temporal realm. This docility did not derive essentially from any innate weakness, but from a contamination of its intelligence. The ideology and phraseology of the rights of man had penetrated the clergy. At the moment when the modern Pantheon was no longer filled with pagan gods, each with its own name and function, rivals of the true God, but had replaced them with abstract and supposedly inoffensive gods such as Liberty, Equality, Popular Sovereignty, the Church accepted its own (more or less surreptitious) incorporation into that Pantheon. Already in the 19th century the majority of French bishops tacitly regretted, even if they did not openly reject, Pius IX's *Syllabus*, that compendium of modern ideas incompatible with the Gospel (3).

(3) The Syllabus of Errors, an appendix to the Encyclical Quanta cura of 5th December 1864, was a catalogue of 80 numbered propositions already condemned by Pius IX. Among modern errors condemned were Rationalism, Gallicanism, Etatism, Socialism, Economism and Naturalism, and No.80 condemned the proposition that "the Roman pontiff can and must reconcile himself and cooperate with progress, liberalism and modern civilization". (Trans.)

Several bishops, already isolated, like the great Cardinal Pie, did not capitulate, and above all the Holy See stood firm. The Church had been invaded, the episcopate increasingly corrupt (as St. Pius X said, metaphorically but clearly, in his last public discourse of 1914), but the Roman fortress held out, still free, still faithful. Although the civil and religious authorities throughout the world no longer listened to the papacy, it was not submerged. It continued clearly to proclaim truth and error, good and evil, justice and injustice. It did this with more or less felicity according to the varying genius, virtues, limitations and weaknesses of each pontiff. However hesitant, "stop-go", even vacillating, the Holy See was fulfilling its function: there was no eclipse at Rome.

It was from the death of Pius XII in 1958 that the eclipse plunged Rome itself into semi-darkness. Until then there may well have been occasions when the Holy See had proved feeble or dilatory in opposing the errors tolerated or spread through the Church by episcopates that had gone intellectually adrift. But at least it had opposed them. From 1958 the way was clear. The Council did not invent, but it gave official recognition to and practically institutionalized, "pastorally" of course, tendencies and beliefs of the new religion, the religion of the rights of man. John XXIII was the first, in his *Pacem in terris* (1963), to eulogize the Declaration of Rights proclaimed by the United Nations in 1948. John Paul II followed this example, and went even further. And the Council "declared" an idea of religious liberty conceived in the same intellectual context to be a right. This was surely a case of swimming with the tide.

The new religion of the rights of man, insofar as it was less and less contradicted by a militant Christianity, it increasingly became an undisputed moral reference, shared by all the establishments in power throughout the world. It did not suppress previous religions and ideologies, which is why I use the term "modern Pantheon"; but it succeeded in infiltrating them, colonizing their language and influencing their conduct. The Church had in the Middle Ages built a sort of unity of the known world, imperfect and hesitant, it is true, but profoundly real all the same. Now the new religion, passionately animated by contemporary

Judaism, is at work constructing its own consensus. Unfortunately, a false religion is a religion of death.

* * *

I am well aware of the objection that can be raised here. The rights of man are Christian in origin; in claiming them the Church is only taking back what is her own, and so John Paul II is right. He is indeed right, and the objection is a valid one, but its scope remains limited.

John Paul II is right to observe that: *"Today we hear much talk of human rights. But one never hears mention of God's rights." "The rights of man and the rights of God are closely linked. Where God and His law are not respected, man can no longer claim his own rights"* (3rd May 1978 at Munich). In saying this John Paul II is just taking back his own property, the Church's property, the property of us all. I would be less reticent if his just reproach - *"talking much of the rights of man without mentioning the rights of God"* - did not apply in the first instance to the Church as a whole and to the Pope himself: for more than 20 years their official message (one can verify this by reference to the texts) has "spoken much about the rights of man" while so often failing to "speak of the rights of God", and making favourable references to the Declarations of Rights as if these spoke only of true rights.

Shall we then talk of true rights? I am coming to that. But first I should like to mention and welcome another pastoral approach, another teaching, one which does not speak of the rights we have, but which by contrast insists all the time on the rights we do not have: - *"Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not commit adultery..."*. This is the teaching of the Decalogue, God's teaching. It is also the traditional teaching of families: "You have no right to..." You will certainly not persuade me that it would be anything but rash and impious to forget or under-estimate it.

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* *

Without prejudice to the preceding argument, the Church could however, by making allowances for the outlook of the

age, militate in favour of human rights, the true ones, rather than restricting herself to just condemning the false ones or putting us on our guard against the exaggerated claims provoked by a one-sided preaching of rights without any mention of corresponding duties.

But if we want to campaign effectively for the "rights" of man, we should listen to these words of Pius XII:

> "The natural law, this is the foundation upon which is built the social teaching of the Church. It is precisely her Christian world-view that has inspired and sustained the Church in her elaboration of this teaching on such a foundation. Whether she fights to conquer or defend her own freedom, she is fighting at the same time for true liberty, for the primordial rights of man. In her eyes, these essential rights are so inviolable that no reason of state, no alleged common good may prevail. They are protected by an impassable barrier. On this side the common good may legislate as it pleases. Beyond the barrier it cannot touch those rights, for they are what is most precious in the common good." (Allocution in French of 25th September 1949.)

Anyone reading this allocution superficially might reply: "You see! Pius XII was already fully engaged in the pastoral recommendation and teaching of the rights of man, which he defined as inviolable and proclaimed as the most precious..."

A closer reading of the text, and a better understanding of Pius XII's teachings will however demonstrate that the human rights he is speaking of are not those of the Declarations of 1789 or 1948, to which he never makes any reference. In the general context of his teaching, as in the passage we have quoted as well as throughout the tradition of natural philosophy, right is founded on the law, and this is founded on the common good.

Thus human rights are not based on a sovereign decree of man's collective conscience, however democratically arrived at. Natural rights are founded on natural law, i.e. the Decalogue, accessible (but only with some difficulty and the risk of error) to our human reason, but on the other hand revealed by God on Sinai and taught by the Church of Jesus Christ, who came not to abolish the law but to accomplish it.

In other words, for Christian philosophy, rights depend on and must be viewed in the light of the common good, which itself consists of a hierarchy of goods subordinated to the sovereign good.

We hear little talk nowadays either of the "common good" or the "sovereign good", and so it may seem strange for me to write here of the *"sovereign common good"*. This last is, without any doubt, God Himself, the ultimate finality in relation to which the whole hierarchy of intermediate common goods, each at its own level and in its proper sphere determines its own law and rights - the common good of the human race, that of a nation, of a family, of a city, a province or a profession - each one is divine, in its place and order, according to how closely and directly it participates in the sovereign good.

The natural common good of the human race is the Decalogue, which even before being revealed by the Creator was inscribed by Him in the heart of every creature, but which, obscured by our passions, our ignorance and all the other consequences of original sin, is neither easily nor completely understood by the individual conscience; it needs to be handed on and taught from generation to generation, and defended against erroneous interpretations and applications. It is *embodied* moreover in a whole network of traditions and customs, national, provincial, family and corporative, which give it a definite flavour, a colour, a sensitive tenderness, a face as it were; but the faithfulness of these traditions to their principle is vacillating, even short-lived, and they more or less often need to be rectified, though always by a reverent touch.

In this doctrinal context it was possible for Pius XII to teach that human rights are the most precious elements of the common good, for the natural common good of the human race is precisely the natural law or Decalogue, foundation, standard and goal of all rights; in a word God Himself, the God of natural reason, who is inseparable from His creative and legislative will revealed in his Ten Commandments.

The sovereign common good is, therefore, in the natural order, the God of the Decalogue, in the supernatural order the Holy Trinity revealed to us in Christ the King. Pascal, if he really wrote: "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob *and not* the God of the philosophers", was wrong in so far as he gave the impression or seemed to be advising a downgrading of the natural order in relation to the supernatural. The two form a unity. The natural and supernatural orders

cannot properly be separated. The supernatural order <u>is</u> the natural order restored, fulfilled and perfected by grace

That is why there is neither opposition between nor any alternative to the social doctrine of the Church founded on the natural law and the social doctrine of the Church founded on Christ the King. Pius XII can indeed say, as he often did, that *"the natural law is the foundation of Catholic social doctrine"*. This is the base line. But not the last word on the subject. The social doctrine of Christ the King does not come to abolish the social doctrine of the natural law, but to fulfil it.

For three or four pages now I have been putting forward a viewpoint that is likely to be incomprehensible to the recent generations of priests and laity, and even more so to unbelievers, the lapsed and laicised clergy. But it is the language of the philosophical and religious tradition of humanity. It was the language of the Holy See from its beginnings to the death of Pius XII. The Church of the second half of the 20th century has turned away from its own philosophical and theological tradition, it has stopped listening to Pius XII, it has not understood his teaching, it has not received the light of the true rights of man, ordained to the sovereign good.

* * *

Among the rights of man, it is, thanks to the media, easy to become a champion of religious liberty. It is quite impossible for them to encounter any opponents who do not, by their very opposition, give themselves away as in favour of religious despotism. Any adversary of liberty is necessarily seen as a supporter of tyranny. There is a powerful psychological obstacle here, and one that critics of the conciliar declaration *Dignitatis humanae* have not found a way to overturn or bypass.

The traditional principle on religious liberty ran: *that no one should be compelled to act, or prevented from acting* ... But this was not to be understood as meaning that no one should be so compelled or prevented *in a religious matter.* It meant that no one must be compelled *to profess and practise the Catholic religion* or prevented from so doing. And in any case it applied only to adults.

Ever since *"men are born and remain free and equal in rights"* (to quote one of the declarations of rights), childhood has ceased to exist. In fact, it no longer exists in the council declaration on religious liberty, and this is what fascinated me right from the outset in that declaration. I do not seem to have had occasion to speak about it. The debate was carried on without me, on the philosophical and theological (almost dogmatic) planes, and this is as it should be, no doubt. But for my part I should like to raise a pedagogical and pastoral objection to this pastoral and pedagogical declaration, an objection motivated by the fascination which it has never ceased to exercise over me.

What horrified and fascinated me was the absence of any discussion of childhood and the education of children. These, after all, were the permanent and primordial concern of the Church at all periods and across the full range of its pastoral and catechetical preoccupations, varied as these were according to time and place. The conciliar declaration deals with the conditions in which a person seeks for religious truth. It treats this subject as if the majority of men were converts, baptised as adults. Such cases occur; they are most praiseworthy, and even perhaps miraculous, but in the nature of things fairly exceptional. Inevitably the majority of adult converts establish a Christian family where the children are baptised at birth. The vast majority of Christians become such without requesting baptism or searching for religious truth. And they remain Christians primarily because they have benefited from an upbringing which was neither indifferent to religious truth nor permissive, but which compelled them to accept this formation. One becomes a Christian and one is led to practise the Christian virtues through the constraints of family life. This is the normal way. In no other area of life is one born free, in any case; one becomes free through an apprenticeship that initially involves constraint.

If you teach "religious liberty" to children *without either compulsion or prevention*, you will soon hear them saying:

"Mum and dad, this Sunday I shan't be going to mass with you. A classmate has invited me to go to the mosque with him. Don't try to stop me. Don't force me."

The obligation to go to Mass is a moral, not a physical one, of course. But in order to become a freely understood and accepted moral obligation, it had to start by being a physical obligation. This is not an abuse. It is the natural order.

One of Louis Salleron's sons, already a teen-ager, once sought to avoid his sabbath duty. "Have you been to Mass?" asked his father. He had not been. "Your conscience is your own affair. But let me tell you: until you've been to Mass, you'll get nothing to eat."

This was the early background in which Dominique grew to become the admirable religious we knew, a true example of Christian liberty, exemplary in piety, in doctrine, in fervour and in supernal friendship (4).

The conciliar declaration on religious liberty seems to have been drafted - and since then favourably commented on - by intellectual bureaucrats inspired by the religion of the rights of man. These secular (i.e. irreligious) rights, as has been said, can only concern a man who was born a foundling and died a celibate. I would see them more precisely as concerning the impossible case of a man *born as an adult foundling*, possessing freedom without undergoing any training in its use, and knowledge without any of the constraints of the educative process.

When the Church's motherly care for children is eclipsed, the catechism disappears, and instead we have the Council Declaration on Religious Liberty. The darkness is growing deeper. But that is no reason why Christian families should feel obliged to throw their Catholic catechisms on the fire or to pin up inside their homes a declaration of freedom proclaiming "There is no compulsion or restraint here."

Jean Madiran

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(4) Dominique Salleron, in religion Père Joseph de Sainte-Marie, O.C.D., professor at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology of the Discalced Carmelites in Rome, died in October 1985 at the age of 46. APPROACHES published a 6-page appreciation of his life and work by Arnaud de Lassus as a supplement to its No. 91.

THEY HAVE ASKED FOR BREAD
LET US GIVE THEM POSTCARDS

The Catholic Welfare Bureau of Cape Town, South Africa [1], whose patron is Cardinal Owen McCann, recently circulated homes in Scotland with a direct mail-shot requesting help. The text of the letter accompanying the mail-shot exhorted recipients to contribute towards a feeding centre. It also gave an example of the need to be met, by indicating the lot of a little boy, "Joseph", who depends on the feeding centre for his only meal of the day.

According to the Bureau's own information it operates, in addition to its feeding centres, mini welfare centres for people troubled in a variety of ways; neighbourhood old-age homes, pre-school caring for children in townships and squatter camp areas, 'Farming in the City' teaching people to grow fresh vegetables, a spinning and knitting women's co-operation providing work for mothers.

Contrary to what you may think this article is not an advertisement for the CWB, about whose activities we have little first hand information. But, at face value, there appears to be little that one could object to in this charity's activities. Indeed the mail-shot appears little different from many of the requests issued by charities from time to time.

This seemingly insignificant request, however, was to give rise to a furore. The Scottish Catholic Observer under a headline 'Beware these letters', published the following advice:

'For the second time in a year an organisation called the Catholic Welfare Bureau of Cape Town, South Africa, has been circulating Catholics in Scotland asking for financial help.

A few of the recipients contacted the Observer and our

1. The Catholic Church in action in today's world bringing love, hope and help to those in desperate need.

investigations show that, while the Bureau is a bona fide charity, its work does nothing to redress the fundamental problem of poverty in South Africa.

Best advice is: put the circular in the bucket and continue to support the project-partners of SCIAF in South Africa whose work does not help bolster up the apartheid system.'

The clear implication of this statement was that the CWB does bolster up the apartheid system!

Following a demand from the CWB, for a public apology, the Observer printed a brutal leader in its issue of 27th October. It refused to apologise claiming that it had served **'both the Scottish Catholic community and the Church's reputation in highlighting what was going on.'**

What was going on to demand such extra-ordinary action? The Observer's tale was this: The CWB was told face to face not to send unsolicited mail **'because Scottish Catholic charities do not operate in this way.'** But, as the Observer freely admitted, **'The Hierarchy (sic) of the Church in Scotland felt, quite properly, that it had no right to tell people here not to support a bona fide Catholic charity simply because it disagreed with its fund-raising approach.'**

Why then was this fellow Catholic charity singled out for such appalling and embarrassing treatment, if not for some petty inter-charity squabble? And what made the Observer so arrogant as to speak on behalf of the Scottish Hierarchy - that is on behalf of every bishop from Wick to Wigtown and Lewis to Leith?

This new found 'mouthpiece' of the Scottish episcopate derived its authority, it seems, from SCIAF: **'The Observer had a duty to go further. We bluntly urged readers, on the advice of our official Catholic Third World agency, SCIAF, "to throw these letters in the bin".'**

But the Observer gives the real reason for this harsh recommendation: **'They** (the CWB) **were ....told of Scottish misgivings about some of the work they carry out - and notably their failure to recognise apartheid as the principal cause of Black poverty in their country.'** (Our emphasis-Ed)

SCIAF's[2] attitude to 'problems' of this nature can best be demonstrated by a letter from SCIAF's Director, Duncan McLaren, which appeared in the same issue. He wrote: **'As for SCIAF, it has a duty, both in its mandate from the Scottish Bishops and its adherence to the church teaching (sic), to tackle the root cause of poverty. In South Africa, the root cause is apartheid. Over that there can be no "difference of opinion". You are either on the side of the oppressed or the oppressor. The duty of the Christian is not to reconcile good and evil, but to do away with evil, and that is exactly what SCIAF, Christian Aid, and other charities are trying to do.'**

One can thus work out the warped SCIAF and Observer logic: the CWB, having failed to recognize apartheid as the principal cause of Black poverty, had also failed to align itself wholly with the **oppressed** and must therefore, by default, be on the side of the **oppressor** - for the Observer and SCIAF there is no middle ground - all evil is on one side and woe to you if you do not see it thus!

The Scottish Catholic Observer's implication, that the Catholic Welfare Bureau is as an organisation which bolsters up apartheid, is clearly a clue as to why this charity, above all others, is not considered worthy of support by Scottish Catholics. The feeding of the starving, the care of the old and the needy, it seems, is only acceptable when carried out by those agencies which **'recognise apartheid as the principal cause of Black poverty.'**

The Scottish Catholic Observer's advice **'to continue to support the project-partners of SCIAF in South Africa whose work does not help bolster up the Apartheid system'** smacks of the sort of cosy arrangement I used to witness, in my trade union days, concerning South Africa when only those organisations having the seal of approval of the A.N.C. were considered worthy of support.

Speaking in the Scottish Catholic Observer regarding the reaction of Mrs. Thatcher to the visit of Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, Mr. McLaren remarked **'Her attitude is purely political and is very sad.....she should learn from agencies that politics don't come into aid, its the need**

2. SCIAF - Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund.

that counts.' - a clear case it seems of 'Do as I say, not as I do.'

One could be cynical, however, and suggest that the CWB is indeed propping up the South African State in that it is attracting foreign currency into that country - in effect sanctions busting. The fact that the money may be going to feed little "Joseph" is of course beside the point. Are we not advised by certain South Africans and certain Catholic churchmen that the blacks are prepared to suffer to overthrow apartheid? Little "Joseph", it seems, must sacrifice his only meal to serve the political end sought by those whose bellies are not as distended as his.

In a recent letter mailed with Justice and Peace Mid Month Mailing (Sep/Oct 1989) Mr McLaren declared:

> 'Apartheid condemned as an evil by Archbishop Winning and Bishop John Mone after their visit to South Africa earlier this year, is one of the most vital issues of our time.....
> Our partners in South Africa are adamant that supporting projects which combat poverty is only part of the equation. Just as important is our action here in the UK and Europe to put pressure on governments to impose sanctions on South Africa to persuade them to change to a system based on human dignity and not exploitation. For this reason, SCIAF has become a member of the Southern Africa Coalition, an organisation started by the churches to urge the British Government to stop propping up the apartheid regime. Archbishop Winning is a patron of this organisation.
> The coalition is encouraging everyone to send postcards...to the Prime Minister and Commonwealth Secretary General before the meeting of the heads of the Commonwealth to encourage a change in attitude towards South Africa on the part of the British Government and to increase pressure on the South African Government itself to end apartheid. Enclosed are some of the postcards which we encourage you and members of your group to send. We would also be grateful for a donation to SCIAF for the cost of these postcards. If you require further details, please do

not hesitate to phone the SCIAF or Justice and Peace Offices.'

Alas, poor "Joseph", you have asked for bread and are to be given postcards!

A.S.F.

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CHARITIES WE RECOMMEND

The Kulandays, whose address we give below, run a home for boys from broken homes, vagrants and orphans in Nasik near Bombay. Please give generously.

Daisy and Victor Kulanday, Galilee, 6 Nimmo Road, San Thome, Madras 60004, INDIA.

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Fr. Aurelius Maschio has concern for over 2000 abandoned and destitute children. He also aids 6000 lepers and handicapped in Bombay.

Contributions to Fr. Maschio's work should be sent to:
V. Rev. Fr. Aurelius Maschio S.D.B., Don Bosco Missions, Matunga, Bombay -400-019, INDIA.

'WHY HAS THE COUNTRY NOT BEEN TOLD? ' - The Soviet "War Beneath the Level of Military Conflict". Available from BLOOMFIELD BOOKS, 26 Meadow Lane, Sudbury, Suffolk, England.

REVIEW

THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS -Kairos and Conversion
Published by CIIR, Center of Concern and Christian Aid
28pp

SOCIAL INJUSTICE
One would be a fool to suggest that there is no social injustice in the Third World. Indeed in his critique of Liberation Theology, Cardinal Ratzinger warned us thus:

'The warning against the serious deviation of some "theologies of liberation" must not at all be taken as some kind of approval, even direct, of those who keep the poor in a state of grinding poverty, who profit from that poverty, who are aware of it while doing nothing about it, or who remain indifferent to it. The Church, guided by the Gospel of mercy and by the love of mankind, hears the cry for justice .... and intends to respond to it with all her might.'

The Church's concern for the poor is not something new. The missionary effort throughout the world was accompanied by solicitude for the poor and the sick which manifested itself in the provision of hospitals, schools and orphanages. The lives of the saints are also witness to this concern for the needy. The crown of sanctity has often been gained by those whose lives were dedicated to the service of the sick, the orphan, the widow and the impoverished, and these saints included many rich people who used their riches for the benefit of their fellow men.

THE SOCIAL ENCYCLICALS
This responsibility we have for the materially poor and unfortunate was the subject of the great social encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI - which all goes to refute the claims of liberation theology that the Church has always been at the service of the rich or the oppressor.

Leo X111 taught us that it is wrong to suppose 'that the solicitude of the Church is so preoccupied with the spiritual concerns of her children as to neglect their temporal and earthly interests. Her desire is that the poor, for example, should rise above poverty and wretchedness.'

Therefore it is wholly wrong to believe that the Church ought not to concern itself with social questions such as the living wage, the just wage, the ownership of property etc. These are just concerns of the Church, and Popes have not been remiss in addressing these problems.

MARX + ROTHSCHILD to MARX + BULTMANN

Arnaud de Lassus in his Dossier on Liberation Theology reminded us that the misery in certain populations in Latin America originates often from a double disorder: that which results from exploitation by liberal plutocracy allied to groups within Freemasonry; and that resulting from a Communist regime or from excessive reaction against such a regime.

M. de Lassus asks, 'Is it likely that we can find a remedy for these disorders, resulting as they do from a joint action of Marx + Rothschild ..... by resorting to an alliance of Marx + Bultmann - a new religion deriving from a German - Jewish sociologist and a German liberal Protestant theologian? Of course not.'

NO EASY MATTER TO DEFINE

As it is an error to believe that the Church is concerned solely with the spiritual so too is it erroneous to consider that the Church ought to be solely pre-occupied by the temporal. This preoccupation with a temporal messianism is a mark of liberation theology and in this regard it could be regarded as a synthesis of Talmudic, Liberal Protestant and Marxist strains.

Leo XIII said that the relative rights and duties of the rich and poor, of Capital and Labour are no easy matter to define. 'The danger lies in this', he warns, 'that crafty agitators are intent on making use of these differences of opinion to pervert men's judgements and to stir up people to revolt.' St Paul said much the same thing about such agitators many years before and to this we shall refer later.

It is the mark of Modernists that they can speak in seemingly orthodox terms or tell half the truth with the express intention of teaching a doctrine which a traditional reading of doctrine will not bear. This trend is also to be found in liberation theology. Such basic concepts as truth, Church,

faith, liberty all have quite different meanings in the lexicon of the liberation theologians. Even the word theology is corrupted - it is no longer theocentric being almost wholly concerned with man's temporal life.

A MARXIST POLITICAL MANIFESTO

It goes without saying, therefore, that a recent declaration by supporters of this theology, should contain elements of truth concerning the ills of Third World nations. There are undoubtedly groups and regimes which persecute the Church; which use Christianity to justify harsh and oppressive policies and there are also Governments, groups and parties which do little to deal with the very real problems which exist in Third World Nations.

But this declaration,"The Road to Damascus", is so partisan, so lacking in objectivity as to be little more than a Marxist political manifesto dressed up in religious garb.

The declaration begins in terms somewhat reminiscent of the Apocalypse:

'We, the signatories of this document, are Christians from different Church traditions in seven different nations: the Philippines, South Korea, Namibia, South Africa, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala.[1]

What we have in common is not only a situation of violent political conflict, but also the phenomenon of Christians on both sides of the conflict. This is accompanied by the development of a Christian theology which sides with the poor and the oppressed and the development of a Christian theology that sides with the oppressor. This is both a scandal and a crisis that challenge the Christian people of our countries.'

. "John to the seven Churches that are in Asia." - this theology exists in more than seven nations. It would not surprise us were <u>seven</u> nations chosen precisely for this effect.

A CALL FOR HELP

The signatories call on their fellow Christians in the Third World, in industrial capitalist countries and socialist countries to build a network of exchange and co-operation. This demand for a network is clearly a deception and demonstrated by the fact that the document is published jointly by the London based **Catholic Institute for International Relations**, the London based **Christian Aid** and the Washington based **Center for Concern**. These bodies are already part of an immense network which involves a host of individuals, groups and bodies, including many official "Catholic" charities, which are harnessed to the service of liberation theology and the new Peoples Church which it has spawned.

The preamble, to the declaration, quoted above is presented as a bald fact, infallible doctrine: On the one side, the authors say, are the poor and oppressed supported by the exponents of liberation theology in its various forms.[2] On the other side the oppressors are supported by the religious right, right-wing Christianity, state theology, the theology of reconciliation, the neo-christendom movements and anti-communist evangelicals. The conflict is therefore seen in terms of this expression of the class war : oppressed v oppressor.

This declaration is not only concerned to deplore these divisions among Christians or to exhort both sides to unity. No these apostles of the new Peoples Church consider they have urgent apostolic tasks to fulfil. These are:

1. to lay bare the historical and political roots of the conflict.
2. to affirm the faith of the poor and oppressed Christians in their countries
3. to condemn the sins of those who exploit, persecute and kill people

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2. "liberation theology, black theology, feminist theology, minjung theology, theology of struggle, the Church of the Poor, the progressive church, basic Christian communities." p.1

4.to call to conversion those who have strayed from the truth of Christian faith and commitment.

THE ROOTS OF CONFLICT

These are presented wholly in terms of the class war and from a marxist perspective. The influence of Christianity in past eras is always depicted in a negative manner; the emphasis is placed on genocide, deculturation and oppression - **'The cross blessed the sword which was responsible for shedding our people's blood.'** The civilizing and charitable works of Christianity are ignored. But by far the greatest blame for these roots of conflict is apportioned to Western imperialism - the power of the U.S., Japan and Western Europe, the multinationals and the military bases.

It is Western imperialism and it alone that is seen as the root of conflict. It is the West which seeks to drive them into the East-West conflict. It is the West which has waged total war on the "people's resistance."

The signatories make no attempt whatsoever to be objective. No mention is made of those other imperialistic nations, Russia and China, whose influence, either direct or indirect, serves to foment and support revolution and terrorism. The authors claim that the struggle is for 'national' liberation bears no close scrutiny, for the cadres of such liberation movements seldom think of themselves as nationalists, but rather as collaborators in a 'continental peoples war'.

THE REAL ROOT OF CONFLICT

Both Pius XI and Leo XIII indicated that the real root of conflict, which has caused the defection from Christian Law and social and economic matters, is original sin and, that society cannot be healed save by return to Christian life and Christian institutions. Christian life and institutions clearly cannot be returned on a vehicle, Marxism, which is wholly incompatible with the Christian message.

THE FAITH OF THE POOR

According to the authors theirs is not the faith preached by the missionaries. Such faith was solely another - worldly faith. It taught a Christ made in the image of the missioner and the oppressor. The faith of the poor, they tell us is

a different faith arrived at by a re-reading of the bible - 'no longer dependent on the interpretation of our oppressors'. The 'new faith' teaches a Jesus who sides with the poor and condemns the rich and who liberates the downtrodden. Jesus is persecuted and oppressed like them. The poor and the rich in this religion are considered solely from a socio-economic perspective. The poor in spirit of the beatitudes are conspicuously absent. This 'faith' of the poor is therefore little other than an expression of the class war.

This neo Protestant-Marxist faith, like many of the Reformation models, is not slow to hurl anathemas.

Accusations of idolatry, heresy, blasphemy and apostasy are levelled at those who oppose this new 'Church'. One cannot be neutral, one cannot take another way. Paradoxically, for a 'Church' which condemns intolerance and sectarianism it will accept no salvation outside its fold. Needless to say these accusations are all directed at Western imperialists and right wingers.

IDOLATRY

Hence, according to the writers, idolaters are 'worshippers of money in our countries' who 'use communism or socialism as a scapegoat' as a means of persecuting the peoples 'Church'. This 'Church' therefore denounces 'all forms of right wing Christianity as heretical.'[3] Right wing Christianity 'is the conscious or unconscious legitimation of idolatry'; 'it denies Christian freedom by insisting on blind obedience to authority'. It is a Christianity in which Christians are commanded to submit themselves blindly to the absolute authority of Church leaders and it persecutes the

[3]. Certain types of "right wing" Christianity are indeed heretical in the true sense of the word. But so also are many of the collaborators in this declaration who belong to all manner of religious sects. Indeed certain "right-wingers" could well fall subject to the criticism levelled at socialism by Pius XI i.e. They are entirely ignorant of and unconcerned about the sublime end both of individuals and of society; affirming that human society was instituted merely for the sake of material well-being.

peoples Church by discrediting priests, pastors, nuns, theologians, Church leaders and Christian communities; it mounts vicious attacks upon liberation theology.

Thus the declaration of the peoples Church is printed in simple concepts of black and white and is all the more dangerous for that. One must agree not only with their analysis of the problem but also with their solution. To choose any other course is to be a heretic, an apostate, an oppressor and this is particularly hard to take from a Church which eschewing intolerance and sectarianism holds its authority from itself alone and from its own private interpretation of scripture.

SLAVES HONOUR YOUR MASTERS

It is all the more galling therefore that the authors should attempt to associate St. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus with their struggle against religious and political authorities and to call 'us' to abandon 'using communism as a scapegoat'.

St. Paul has not always been so popular with these modern zealots. Indeed in Timothy 1:VI St. Paul exhorts slaves to honour their masters and he warns that one who teaches otherwise is puffed up with conceit, knows nothing, has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words which produce envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions, and wrangling among men who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth imagining that godliness is a means of gain.[4] It is for this reason that Paul has been considered by one liberation theologian as a traitor.

St. Paul does not condemn the rich, but advises them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous thus laying up for themselves a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of the life which is life indeed.

In their conclusion, the authors of the declaration state

[4]. This is not to suggest that St. Paul approves of slavery. He is aware however that the remedy proposed by some is likely to worsen the lot of the slaves rather than better it

'What is at stake is the true meaning of our Christian faith. Who is God? Who is the true Jesus? Obviously these questions are to be answered according to the lights of liberation theology.

Christ however will not be bound in their partisan and marxist Church. He is to be found in **His** Church, and peace and social justice will not be found either in the East, West or Third World until men acknowledge His Kingship and establish a social order in conformity with **His** teaching as it is expressed in the authentic social teaching of **His** Church.

A.S.F.

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THEY FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT: ORESTES BROWNSON - Fr FEENEY
Editor: Thomas Mary Sennott
Paperback 440pp. ISBN 0-9620994-0-6
Published by Catholic Treasures, 626 Montana Street, Monrovia, California.
Bears Imprimi potest of Bishop of Worcester.

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH THERE IS NO SALVATION

Ecumania, and the many Interfaith initiatives spawned by it, has all but shut out from men's minds that dogma of the Church, **'outside of the Church there is no salvation'**[1]. Indeed so lax is the attitude to salvation in certain quarters that one is driven to ask one's self why Our Blessed Saviour came on earth at all, or why He established His Church, when men, according to contemporary thinking, appear to be able to gain salvation by following all manner of religions and none.[2]

ALL ARE SAVED

There are many who are so afflicted with this false irenicism as to find it difficult to disagree with the observation by the Jewish philosopher Mordecai Kaplan that, **'it is possible to be an adherent of more than one religion. The sense in which we have used the term "religion" - a way of life based on spiritual values - does not limit it to any particular method of validation or any exclusive method of salvation.'** So deep have men sunk into this syncretist torpor that "charity" positively demands that they do not disabuse the erring of their errors - which, of course is the worst example of lack of true charity. In true masonic style we have all become Jock Thompson's bairns a' goin' the same way.

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[1] extra ecclesiam nulla salus

[2] c.f. The Golden Rule elsewhere in this Apropos

This expectation of universal salvation is in stark contrast to that of traditional Christianity - does not Our Saviour warn us that the way is narrow and **'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned.'** (Mark xvi. 16.) Alas it is not uncommon to find, even among priests, an unwillingness to admit that anyone may be condemned - this belief is demonstrated at funeral services where priests presume the sanctity of the deceased by remarking that **' "x" is now playing his harp in heaven'** or that **' "y" has now found peace with his Lord and Maker.'** In contrast Catholic services in the past were always marked with expressions of hope that the deceased may find eternal rest.

THE BOSTON HERESY CASE

The interpretation of the doctrine 'outside of the Church there is no salvation' has been, in recent decades, the subject of much controversy, which reached its apogee in the famous so called Boston Heresy Case which resulted in Fr Leonard Feeney being expelled from the Jesuits and his subsequent excommunication along with many of his staunchest followers. It appears that Fr Feeney was excommunicated not for his doctrinal stand but rather for 'grave disobedience to Church Authority. ' At face value the treatment of Fr Feeney seems analogous to that meted out to Archbishop Lefebvre during his early attempts to save Econe. Fr Feeney was summoned to Rome for a hearing on his teaching and conduct but refused to go until such time as the Holy Office gave him a statement of the charges preferred against him. Fr Feeney's supporters to this day claim that the excommunication was unsound for the very reason that charges were never preferred against him. Fr Feeney was reconciled in 1972 by the simple device of reciting the Athanasian Creed the terms of which he had never denied. Twenty nine of his followers were also reconciled by the simple device of making **'the usual profession of faith according to the traditional formula.'**

This work contains a potted history of Fr Feeney and the sad story of his exile. Whatever Fr Feeney's faults may have been he was consumed with a desire to convert America and it was perhaps because his converting zeal was having its affect among the Wasp elite that there was so much antagonism to him

from within the American ecclesial community. He was in effect questioning the cosy peaceful co-existence between the Church and the Protestant establishment.

MADNESS, FOLLY OR FANATICISM?

The other subject of this book is Orestes Brownson whose views were barely distinguishable from Fr Feeney's on the subject of salvation. Brownson wrote, with full ecclesiastical approval, the following uncompromising defence of the much discussed dogma:

'There is no salvation out of the Church. Men must come into her communion or be lost forever. If it be not so, why has God instituted His Church [3], why has He given her authority, and commanded her to teach all nations until the consummation of the world? Why are we so attached to her, why does she hold so high a place in our affections, and why would we rather suffer a thousand deaths than swerve one iota from the faith she enjoins? Why do we strive to bring all men into her sacred enclosure? Why visit our missionaries every land, and in every land suffer privation, want, distress, persecution, and death, to bring men into the Church, if salvation is possible without her agency, if the people who sit in the region and shadow of death, by following such light as they have, can be saved, though living and dying out of her communion, and in ignorance of her very existence? Concede the possibility, and the conduct of the apostles, the fathers, the saints and martyrs, of zealous Catholics in every age, is madness, folly, or fanaticism.'

Brownson himself a convert, having arrived at the Church via Presbyterianism, Universalism, being an infidel, Unitarianism and 'a new Catholicity without the papacy', was under no illusion as to the importance of this doctrine especially concerning Protestants. In 1874 Brownson asserted;

'There can be no more fatal mistake than to soften, liberalize or latitudinise this terrible dogma, "Out of the

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[3] the original text has these pronouns in lower case

Church there is no salvation".... If we wish to convert Protestants and infidels we must preach in all its rigor the naked dogma. Give them the smallest peg, on which to hang a hope of salvation without being in or actually reconciled to the Church by the sacrament of penance, and all the arguments you can address to them to prove the necessity of being in the Church to be saved will have no more effect on them than rain on a duck's back.'

A TINGE OF AMERICANISM

Strange as it may seem Brownson, at one stage in his life, espoused Americanism [4] as he said, **'to repel the charge that an American cannot become a convert to the Church without ceasing to feel and act as an American Patriot.'** He admitted also in 1871 that one of the greatest mistakes he made was **'of laboring (from 1860-64) to present Catholicity in a form as little repulsive to my non-Catholic countrymen as possible.'**

Whether this Americanism existed to some extent before that date is not clear from the book but there is a certain Americanist flavour in parts of Brownson's article **Civil and Religious Toleration** written in 1849. [5] In particular we refer to the following passages which were no doubt intended to assuage the worries of American Protestants:

'Catholicity is perfectly compatible with political toleration, and concedes at least extensive toleration as it is professed, and for the most part honorably maintained, by American government. Our religion contains nothing, in case we should become the majority, and the political power should pass in this country into our hands, which would require any external change in our existing political institutions, in

[4] Americanism was condemned by Leo XIII in 1899 by his letter **Testem Benevolentiae.**

[5]. Francis McMahon saw a remarkable parallel existing between the views of John Courtney Murray and Brownson stating that the then forthcoming Vat.II decree on religious liberty should be known as the Brownson - Murray formulation.

our domestic and social economies, or in the present mutual relation of the civil and ecclesiastical powers.'
'Our civilization is founded on a right basis, is Roman and Christian in its groundwork; and there never has been a state constituted throughout more in harmony with Catholic principles than the American.'

This attitude seems to have been echoed at least implicitly by Cardinal O'Connor in his defence of the American episcopate in which he claimed that, **'Every American bishop, including myself, would fight fiercely to preserve the American pluralistic political system, safeguarded in part by constitutional checks and balances and by a very strong commitment to the principle of "one person, one vote." I do not know a single American bishop who would opt for a state Church.'**[6]

IS AMERICA TO BE TAKEN AS THE IDEAL

There is no doubt that the Catholic Church in America was free from molestation by the State, but this freedom, after all, was the Church's right. But as Leo XIII reminded the American bishops in 1895 in his letter **Longinqua Oceani, '...it would be very erroneous to draw the conclusion that in America is to be sought the type of the most desirable status of the Church, or that it would be universally lawful or expedient for State and Church to be, as in America, dissevered and divorced. The fact that Catholicity with you is in good condition, nay is even enjoying a prosperous growth, is by all means to be attributed to the fecundity with which God has endowed His Church, in virtue of which unless men and circumstances interfere, she spontaneously expands and propagates herself; but she would bring forth more abundant fruits if in addition to liberty, she enjoyed the favor of the laws and the patronage of the public authority.'**

Brownson appeared to be of the opinion that an alliance of Church and State was only required when societies were barbaric and required the Church's civilizing influence. I suspect that his attitude would have been different were he

[6]. Catholic New York, March 16 1989.

to have foreseen the decadence of modern society and its toleration of neo-paganism - a position at which it has arrived precisely because of its failure to acknowledge Christ's Kingship and the civilizing influence that flows therefrom. Christian civilization cannot be sustained cut off from the source from whence it came.

This apart, Brownson was a fearless fighter for the Faith and much of what he writes concerning Protestantism reveals the vapid, mealy mouthed ecumania of today for what it is.

NOT ALL THE PROBLEMS BEGAN AFTER THE COUNCIL

Fr Fehlner remarks on the cover of the book that not all of the problems of the Church began after the Council. We can only endorse this observation and recommend this book to our readers, if for no other reason than to allow them to re-acquaint themselves with the dogma **'Outside of the Church there is no salvation'** the naked expression of which is anathema to the proponents of modern ecumania.

Anthony S. Fraser

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For further information contact: Mrs Ruth Real, Hon. Secy., Association of Catholic Women, 22 Surbiton Hill Park, Surbiton, Surrey, KT5 8ET, England. Tel. 01 399 1459.

(The following article by Cardinal Ottaviani is reproduced from 'Catholic Documents', published by the Pontifical Court Club in 1951. The advice proferred by the Cardinal is as valid now as it was then. We think in particular of the Medjugorje 'signs and wonders'.)

"SIGNS AND WONDERS—A WARNING"

Osservatore Romano, 14th February, 1951

NO Catholic questions the possibility of miracles or doubts that they do happen. Christ's mission and His divine Nature were proved by the many great miracles He performed here on earth. The early Church overcame initial difficulties and persecutions because the Holy Ghost gave her special help that expressed itself visibly in the gifts the Apostles enjoyed and in the large number of the elect among the first generations of Christians. Once the Church was consolidated these special gifts of the Holy Ghost, as we can well understand, grew less; but they have not ceased. The help of the Holy Ghost and the presence of Christ in His Church will last until the end of time. The former shows itself by supernatural signs, and by miracles.

By way of example, it is enough to call attention to the miracles that are examined during the process of the beatification of the servants of God or the canonization of the Blessed. Such miracles are rigorously tested both scientifically and theologically. One might add that the rigour with which the miraculous cures at Lourdes are examined is common knowledge.

Let no one call us enemies of the supernatural, therefore, if we set ourselves now to the task of warning the faithful against unchecked statements concerning certain supposed supernatural happenings, statements which are fairly widespread at the present time, and which might jeopardize the recognition of a true miracle and bring it into discredit.

Our Lord Himself has put us on our guard against " false prophets " who " will show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray if possible, even the elect " (Matt. 24, 24). Such wonders have occurred from the earliest days of the Church (Acts 8, 9). For this reason the Church has the right and duty to judge the truth and the nature of facts and revelations said to have come about by a special intervention of God. And it is the duty of all good children of the Church to submit to this judgment.

As a mother, the Church has to bear the burden of a mother's heavy and sorrowful duties, and, like all mothers, she sometimes has the duty not only to take action, but to suffer, to keep silent, and to wait. Fifty years ago who would have thought that the Church would now be in the position of having to warn her children, even her priests to be on their guard against so-called miracles, against all those happenings acclaimed as preternatural, which are arousing the interest of the masses, now here, now there, in almost every continent and country? Fifty years ago, when the " scientific " and positivist attitude was rife, people

would have laughed at anyone who paid attention to and believed in what was called superstition of the dark ages. Fifty years ago people reviled the Church because she alone persisted in upholding the existence of miracles, their spiritual worth, negative or positive, and their beauty or ugliness. One of the commonest and most solemn of subjects in the field of apologetics at that time was the miraculous. Now the Church has to warn her children through the lips of bishops, repeating the words of the Divine Master (Matt. 24. 24) not to allow themselves to be easily led astray by such happenings and not to believe in them save with eyes wide open and only when the authorities, after the needed inquiries, have given their reports.

For some years past we have witnessed an increase of popular hankering after the wonderful, even in the sphere of religion. The faithful repair in vast crowds to places where visions and wonders are supposed to have taken place, whilst, at the same time, they abandon the Church, the Sacraments, preaching and instruction. People who are ignorant of the first words of the Creed set themselves up as ardent apostles of religious belief and practice. Some of them do not hesitate to speak of the Pope, the bishops and the clergy in terms of severe blame, and then are very annoyed when the latter do not take part with the crowd, in all the enthusiasm and outbursts of certain popular movements.

Although this is not pleasant, it causes no surprise. Man's feelings are natural, even religious feelings. Just as man is a rational animal, so he is a political and a religious animal. By bringing disorder and confusion into the nature of man and his feelings, original sin has, one may say, also attacked religious feeling. This is the explanation of the wanderings and errors and twistings of truth in the history of human kind. Yet it is a fact that such errors are much more troublesome where religion is concerned. When they came to redeem man from his darkness and shortcomings, revelation and grace restored him to his true nature especially in matters of religion. Once having healed man's wounded and stricken nature, grace gives it an overflow of strength to be used in the service and love of God. The Church, the custodian and interpreter of the true religion, was born of the word and of the blood of Our Lord.

To think oneself religious, in whatever way that may be is not necessary. What is needed is to be truly religious. As in the case of other feelings, there can be, and in point of fact there are, wanderings away from true religious feeling. Religious feeling must be guided by reason, nourished by grace, and governed, as is our whole life, by the Church, and even more strictly governed. There are such things as religious instructions, religious education and religious training. Those who have set themselves against the authority of the Church and religious sentiment so light-heartedly, find themselves, to-day, faced with imposing outbursts of an instinctive religious feeling that completely lack the light of reason and the consciousness of grace—a religious feeling that has no check or control.

There follow deplorable acts of disobedience to the ecclesiastical authorities when they intervene to apply the needed brake. This

happened in Italy after the so-called visions of Voltago; in France over the Espis and Bouxierres incidents which were akin to those in Hampsur-Sambre (Belgium); then in Germany at Heroldsback, and in the United States of America in the case of the manifestations at Necedah. One could quote other examples in other countries near and far.

The present period stands between these two excesses which are; open inhuman irreligion, and unrestrained blind religious fervour. Persecuted by the supporters of the first and compromised by those who uphold the second, the Church simply repeats a motherly warning. But the warning is unheard amid denial on the one hand and exaltation on the other.

There is no doubt that the Church does not wish to cast a shadow over the wonders worked by God. What is desired is simply to keep the faithful watchful concerning what comes from God and what does not come from God, but could, instead, come from His and from our adversary. The Church is the enemy of the *false* miracle.

A good Catholic knows from his catechism that the true religion rests on the true Faith, on that Revelation which ended with the death of the last Apostle, and has been entrusted to the Church, its interpreter and custodian. Nothing else necessary for our salvation can be revealed to us. There is nothing more for which we need look. We have every thing, if we wish to make use of it. Even the most accredited visions can indeed furnish us with new motives for fervour but not with new elements of life or doctrine. True religion abides essentially, apart from its place in the conscience, in the love of God and in what follows from it, namely, love of our neighbour. And, the love of God consists in doing the will of God, and obeying His Commandments rather than in acts of worship and ritual. This is true religion.

A good Catholic knows that in the saints themselves holiness consists not in the preternatural gifts of vision, prophecy, and wonder-working, but in the heroic exercise of virtue. That God should in some way endorse holiness by miracles is one thing, but that holiness consists in performing miracles is another. We must not confound holiness with what can be, and is generally, simply an unmistakable sign of holiness, yet not always so clear as not to need the supervision of religious authority.

On this point the teaching of the Church has never been equivocal. The man who turns to events of doubtful interpretation rather than accept the word of God, loves the world more than God. Even when the Church authoritatively canonizes a saint, this does not guarantee the preternatural character of all the extraordinary facts connected with his life. Still less does the Church approve all his personal opinions. There is even less guarantee of all that is written, often with unpardonable levity, by biographers whose imagination outstrips their judgment.

We repeat that to be religious, it is necessary to be so with propriety and as a matter of duty. If we would be good and devout Catholics we must act with the same attention as that with which we apply ourselves to the most serious things in life. Being incredulous is just as harmful to the sincere believer as being ready to believe. True, not